1964

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EASTERN DEPARTMENT

GENERAL

E 1073/66.

FROM T.E. Bromley
Damascus to
Sir H. Beeley Cairo

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 1076/64

Dated Feb 8.

Received Feb 13.

SUBJECT

View that Nasser's main reason for convening the Summit Conference was the risk that the Syrians might involve him in hostilities against his will.

References

-/43

MINUTES

NEAD (Mr. Higgins)

(Printing Instructions)

(Outward Action)

(Action completed)

(Main Indexed)

CONFIDENTIAL

I076/6

With the compliments of

HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S

AMBASSADOR

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BRITISH EMBASSY

DAMASCUS

February 8, 1964.

CONFIDENTIAL

1076/64

BRITISH EMBASSY,

DAMASCUS.

February 8, 1964.

E1073/43

I read with great interest your despatch No. 8 of January 24 (10712/64) about the Arab Summit Conference in Cairo and your analysis in it of Nasser's motives in calling it. It has emerged fairly clearly at this end too that the Syrians were pretty well isolated and that no progress was made in improving relations between the two countries.

2. Towards the end of paragraph 10 of your despatch you mention that Nasser's main anxiety over Jordan waters, namely that the risk that the Syrians might involve him against his will in hostilities with the Israelis, may not, in his opinion, entirely have been removed. It occurs to me that, in view of the belligerence of Syrian utterances about Jordan waters, this might almost have been the main reason for his convening the Conference. Would he not reckon that probably the only contingency which could result in his removal from the political scene in Egypt would be another defeat for the Egyptian Army in the Sinai Peninsula? This danger he certainly seems to have succeeded in preventing, subject only to the possibility which you mention. As regards that, it seems to us here, as we have mentioned in recent correspondence, that the risk is not so much that Hafez himself might act impetuously as that some officer on the southern front might take matters into his own hands. The opinion here is that this risk is less than it was, although it is still just a possibility.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Willie Morris.

(T. E. Bromley)

Sir Harold Beeley, K.C.M.G., C.B.E.,
Cairo.

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